

EXHIBIT A

H. R. BANAS

HONORABLE WILLIAM M. SKRETNY
UNITED STATES CHIEF JUDGE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
2 NIAGARA SQUARE
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14202

RE: U.S. V. MARK L. KAMHOLZ 10-CR-219

DEAR CHIEF JUDGE SKRETNY:

I AM SUBMITTING THIS LETTER ON BEHALF OF MARK KAMHOLZ. I AM A RETIRED ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTY. I SERVED A LITTLE MORE THAN 29 YEARS. I HAVE KNOWN MARK FOR OVER 30 YEARS, HE IS MARRIED TO MY COUSIN SANDRA.

I HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN MARK TO BE A GOOD HUSBAND AND FATHER. HE TREATS SANDRA WELL AND IS PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING WITH HIS CHILDREN. HE WAS INVOLVED WITH SCHOOL SPORTS, YOUTH HOCKEY AND JEREMY AND JORDAN'S EDUCATION.

MARK WAS ALWAYS THERE TO CARE FOR HIS MOTHER AND MOTHER IN LAW IN THEIR LATER YEARS. HE PROVIDED THEM WITH ANY TYPE OF ASSISTANCE THAT THEY NEEDED AT ANY TIME.

MARK HAS ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE A QUIET AND RESERVED PERSON. HE HAS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND TO ME AND MY FAMILY, HELPING ANYWAY HE CAN. I WOULD CONSIDER HIM TO BE A GOOD INDIVIDUAL. I AM PROUD TO KNOW HIM.

RESPECTFULLY YOURS

i
u

UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
2 NIAGARA SQUARE
BUFFALO, NY 14202

RE: U.S.V. MARK L KAMHOLZ,
10-CR-219

DEAR JUDGE SKRETNY:

I'M WRITING YOU ON BEHALF OF
MARK, WHO MARRIED MY 1ST COUSIN
JAWDY, SOME 30 YEARS AGO.

THROUGH THE YEARS I'VE KNOWN
MARK TO BE A QUIET, WELL
MANERED, HARD WORKING MAN
WHOS LIFE CENTERS AROUND
HIS FAMILY.

MARK'S TWO SONS JEREMY AND
JORDAN ARE HARD WORKING,
INTELLIGENT, RESPECTFUL AND
THOUGHTFUL YOUNG MEN WHO ARE
A TESTAMENT TO THE VALUES THAT
I BELIEVE MARK POSSESSES AND
HAS INSTILLED IN THEM.

RESPECTFULLY YOURS

ROBERT BANAS

Jeremy Kamholz

Honorable William M. Skretny
United States Chief Judge
Western District of New York
2 Niagara Square
Buffalo, NY 14202

re: U.S. v. Mark Kamholz, 10-CR-219

Dear Chief Judge Skretny:

I am Jeremy Kamholz and I am writing on behalf of my father Mark Kamholz. My father is a great man, trustworthy individual, husband of 30 years, hardworking, and a role model to me. My father is the type of person who would give the world and ask for nothing in return, but to see you smile and be happy. I am now 27 year old, engaged, and an entrepreneur, I have come to appreciate the moral, ethical, and family values my mother and father had taught my brother Jordan and I from when we were kids up until present day. My father instilled values in me such as to be hardworking, to never give up, to take responsibility for my actions, to be a good citizen of the community, and a good sportsman.

In my teenage years I worked as a Buffalo News paperboy. This was my first job where I was able to learn about how to make a schedule, build relationships with customers, provide a service, collect payments, and work hard. For most people the weekend is a time for relaxation, sleep in, recuperate from the week, etc. This was untrue for my dad. He would be up nice and early to help me deliver the morning newspaper. It's not that I had a big route, because it was not, but that it was one way my dad would spend time with me and helped me out by using the car rather than my bicycle or braving the snow and cold. I will never forget those small tokens of generosity and the times we had.

Spending time and being actively involved in our lives is just what our mother and father have always done. My brother and I both played ice hockey. I was a center forward and my brother played goalie. Our father coached our teams year after year from when we were Mites (age 8) through Midgets (age 18). Dad always taught us good sportsmanship and teamwork. He helped us learn from blowout losses to blow out wins how to not act like a sore loser and to be good sportsman about winning big too. My competitive playing career came to an end in 2005 and it ended in historical fashion. My dad coached this team as well and I was captain and my brother was goalie as our team went undefeated 29-0. We were and still are the only team in Midget division in West Seneca to go undefeated.

Although we never made the NHL, we played like we were going to be. At times my brother and I were on a combined 4 ice hockey teams all at once, playing almost every night of the week. Talk about a logistical nightmare for our parents. They were admirable to maintain responsibilities of their full time jobs, our travel needs to be at the rinks, our school work/ activities, scheduling conflicts let alone house work. I have great appreciation for my parents giving everything they have for us.

Today, my brother and I own and operate a landscaping and construction business. We have worked countless hours, tirelessly to make it the success it is today. We would have never been this successful currently if it were not for our mother and father. When we were starting out my father would let us use his trailer, lawn mower, trimmer, and his vehicle when it was free to get from place to place. As we grew we needed bigger and better equipment. Without neither asking nor hesitation he offered to help us financially if need be by loaning us money or co-signing a loan. I know my friend's parents would not do this, but this is one of those situations that sets my father apart and shows that he believes in us to be successful and knows that we are hardworking, trustworthy, and responsible to do so. Currently, my father is looking forward to retiring and working for us in any capacity necessary to help us out.

For over nearly 4 years now, our family has dealt with my father and our family name in the news on a frequent basis. We have stayed strong together even though at times it has been very difficult and stressful. From the day I heard my father was arrested by my mother crying on the phone, to the news showing up at our house, still photos and videos of us on T.V., and phone calls looking for comments from or about my father I knew it was going to take a toll on our family. I remember the night this story broke on the news and feeling like the world is caving in on us. However, it did not take long after that news segment that we started to get phone calls from friends and relatives telling us that if we need anything that they are there for us. Its moments like those you start to realize just how well respected, liked, and loved my father and our family is with the support of our friends and relatives. To this day, our friends and family fully support my father and our family. They know the kind of person my father is and the kind of gentlemen my brother and I are because of him.

My mother, brother, and I were all part of the decision making on deciding whether or not our father should go to trial. My brother and I urged our father to go to court knowing full well the integrity and creditability he possesses. Had this been untrue we would have never supported him in the manner we did.

In court, our family and friends came to support my father. My brother, a family friend, and I were present in court nearly every day. It was important to us that at least one of us be there in court every day to support our father. My father has always been there for us and this was not a time to turn our backs on our father. We heard almost all the testimony in person. Most of which, was very complicated and required a scientific mind to understand. It was particularly troubling for me to sit there and listen to both sides make there points and believe that it was only my dad's neck on the line for his nearly 40+ years of employment at the plant. It was appalling to hear a disingenuous prosecutor call my father a liar during open statements. There are many things that my father is, however one thing

my father is NOT would be a liar. Does not seem fair nor right to have inspectors of the state DEC who were at the plant in many cases for periods of time of 10+years to bear no responsibility for the short comings of the plant. Does not seem fair nor right to come down hard on my father who through documents shown in court has always been in communication with the government whether it is letters submitting data, requests for information, or clarification. Putting a man's career under a microscope is sure to find some imperfections. No one is perfect but the 30+ years that were in question, my father's career displayed a lot of hard work that showed he always performed to the best of his ability with integrity and honor, and was not out to mislead the government.

My father, Mark Kamholz, has upheld his life to the highest of moral and ethical standards. As what I have displayed above and to the credit of my mother and father, they have raised myself and brother to uphold these values and traditions that our parents hold dearest to them. These standards and merits are reflected by not only us, but by our friends and family who know my father to be a man of trust, hardworking, responsibility, selflessness, and friend of the community.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Kamholz

Jordan Kamholz

Honorable William M. Skretny
United States Chief Judge
Western District of New York
2 Niagara Square
Buffalo, NY 14202
Re: United States v. Mark Kamholz, 10-CR-219

Dear Chief Judge Skretny:

The following letter is in full support of Mark Kamholz. A hard-working, honest middle class American family man.

Mark Kamholz is an outdoorsman, avid hunter, husband of 30 years, and a remarkable father. He is a man of integrity, values, and military service. No one would know this better than myself, Jordan Kamholz, a very proud son. I'm proud that my father stood up for himself and his career which has spanned more than 40 years. I'm proud to have him as an example of strength and determination. I would also note that my pride is not clouded by blind optimism and I'm not ignorant to the facts. It is these cold hard truths that have solidified my conviction that my dad took his responsibility as environmental control manager seriously and worked diligently to reduce plant emissions. As a result of Marks' efforts the emissions from Tonawanda Coke are a fraction of what they were when he started in 1970. While Mark is no more perfect than the next person, he is a religious man who lives his life with the highest standards of morals and values.

I'm twenty five years old, a graduate of the School of Management at The University at Buffalo. I paid for school without taking any student loans, a feat few students have accomplished. When I was 12 I decided that because I didn't receive any allowance from my parents I needed a way to make money. I wasn't very good with computers so my only marketable skill at the time was cutting lawns. I canvassed the neighborhood and within a few days had myself a lawn customer. While my friend's birthday gifts consisted of the latest hot new toys; for my 13th birthday my dad bought me a lawn mower. It might sound dumb but that lawn mower gave me the entrepreneurial bug. Later I would convince him that for my 16th birthday, a \$3,000 John Deere LX277 lawn

tractor would not only make a great birthday present it'll be an investment in my future. 2 years later my brother and I traded the John Deere in for a Kubota compact tractor which we bought with our own money and a little help from grandma Kamholz for \$13,300. When I was 23 years old we traded the Kubota in for an even larger tractor with a backhoe. We bought it for \$28,400, this time with no assistance. That \$3,000 tractor was dad's way of instilling work ethic in us. Yet it taught us so much more than that. We learned responsibility, scheduling, what a ledger is, networking, dealing with people, and of course how to pay taxes. I don't think he could have imagined what our little neighborhood lawn business would turn into. Today Jeremy and I have 5 trucks, 4 trailers, and 3 fantastic employees. Kamholz Enterprises L.L.C. d/b/a Kamholz Landscape Construction exists because dad believed in us then. It wasn't about the money for Dad, because money never played a big role in his life. It was about instilling values, and old fashioned work ethic. There are many good fathers, but this was just one example of why Mark is an excellent father.

Every fall for the last 14 years Dad, Jeremy, and I have gone hunting together. This was always an opportunity to take time out of our busy schedules to enjoy the outdoors and each other. During one of our hunting trips we took note of all the maple trees in one particular area. We talked about how neat it would be to make our own maple syrup. That next year we strung some lines and before you knew it we had 80 trees tapped. For the next few years we made a couple of gallons of syrup. Looking back on it, it wasn't the syrup that was important, it was the time we spent together figuring out how to produce a product, and run an efficient operation. I will always remember these hunting trips. Life is too short, and it is a shame this tradition will have to end earlier than god intended.

My dad was an active participant throughout my entire childhood. He coached soccer and hockey, and in the process became a mentor and second father to most of my friends. When we needed advice on anything from homework to how to build a tree fort that won't fall apart, it was his extension at Tonawanda coke that would ring. We were very active kids who basically lived outside and were more likely to be building tree forts or rebuilding engines that we had garbage picked than doing homework. Needless to say his phone rang a lot during summer vacation.

After sitting through the trial it was clear to me that the government was hell bent to use an ends justifies the means mentality to portray my father in a light that could not be further from the

truth. The facts mattered to them the same as they matter in a fictional novel. One clear example is when Mr. Piagionne referred to a concrete sidewalk and called it the equivalent of the definition of the ground. I believe these claims were intentionally designed to confuse the jury. This has been my first experience with the American Judicial System and although this is not the time or venue to express my dismay, I hope my experience here was an exception and not the rule.

Throughout my life my dad has been there for my family, friends, our neighbors, his co-workers, and myself. He has been a steady hand through this whole case. Since 2009 we have been the pawns of the governments politically motivated campaign. I am hopeful that the court will see past the government's claims, recognize the man my dad really is, and keep him home with us.

Very Truly Yours;

Jordan Kamholz

Sandra Kamholz

Honorable William M. Skretny
Chief Judge, United States District Court
Western District of New York
2 Niagara Square
Buffalo, New York 14202

August 28, 2013

Dear Judge Skretny,

My name is Sandra Kamholz and for the last 30 years I have been happily married to Mark Kamholz, an honorable, kind and loving man who will soon come before you for sentencing. I am proud of my husband; I always have been and always will be. It was painful for all of us (Mark, myself and our two sons who were in the court room every day) to listen to the comments and innuendo the Government made about Mark. Anyone who knows Mark knows those insinuations, misrepresentations and derogatory remarks about Mark could not have been further from the truth. Misleading and trying to trick people, is not and never will be part of Mark's character. I was both saddened and appalled at many of the untruthful and/or misleading comments that came out of the Government attorney's mouths.

Any person I ever spoke with from Tonawanda Coke (or affiliated with Tonawanda Coke) spoke/speaks highly of Mark, his strong work ethic, his diligence, and his integrity. Mark was, and is, a dedicated employee. He has worked for Tonawanda Coke since 1978 and before that, starting in 1970, he worked for Allied Chemical, the previous owners of Tonawanda Coke. That's a combined 43 years! I know he is well respected in the industry, and deservedly so.

Yet, the most important attributes of Mark's center on his focus on our family. Mark is a loving, patient, nurturing father who has guided our sons, Jeremy and Jordan, into becoming responsible, productive, self-reliant young men. He has always motivated and encouraged our sons to be independent, rational thinkers and contributing members of society. Our boys have worked and developed their own business since they were young teenagers. That initiative, drive and commitment was modeled for them by Mark. In fact, in a perfect world, at some point after this ordeal is over, Mark will work for our sons. The boys look forward to having their father involved with their business. There is no one they would rather be with.

Personally, I could not hope for a better husband. Mark is very easy going and good natured. He is always calm and reasonable; his mere presence provides me with comfort and security. Mark doesn't get mad. There is no room in Mark's heart for anger or hate. He believes in the basic goodness of people.

Mark is a quiet man who shows his love through his actions. I cannot even remember when the last time was that I had to put gasoline in my car. Mark simply takes care of things;

he sees what needs to be done and he does it without fanfare. I know Mark would do anything for me – and he has – from attending a play he is not really interested in seeing to going to the philharmonic when he would rather be home watching a sporting event on television. He NEVER complains; he is not reactive. He is a deep and practical thinker (who sometimes thinks out loud). After Jeremy and Jordan were in school, Mark supported my desire to return to the work force as a teacher's aide in the West Seneca School System. Although we had survived for many years without me financially contributing, Mark understood my need and desire to enjoy the rewards of working outside the home, and he has fully supported me in my career, including taking on more household chores and responsibilities.

Mark and I love to putter around our home to keep it clean and comfortable for family and friends to spend time with us. Judge Skretny, we are simple, private people; we have always lived this way. There is little extravagant about us or our life style; we simply like to be together and with our sons. We have lived modestly, and quite honestly, frugally. We have always taken our financial responsibilities very seriously and are not people who have been caught up in consumerism. We live in a quiet, middle class neighborhood in a small, modest three bedroom ranch. We pay our bills on time and do not carry credit card debt. Even the home we purchased in Nevada was part of our retirement planning and purchased primarily through an inheritance. My point, Judge Skretny, is that Mark is, and always has been an unassuming, unpretentious man who would never intentionally make decisions or choices that would harm others, personally or professionally.

While there are many sad and punishing aspects of this ordeal for our family, one of the realities that saddens me the most is that as a result of this felony conviction, my husband can no longer go hunting with Jeremy and Jordan. It may seem like a silly thing to be so acutely aware of, but for Mark and the boys, hunting was an important part of their relaxation time together. They went out no less than three or four times a year and thoroughly enjoyed their time together. To have this liberty taken from all three of them is a form of punishment that may not be obvious or even significant to some people, but is genuinely significant to our family.

Your Honor, despite whatever our personal feelings may be about this trial and its outcome, we know that the next step is in your hands. I am hoping you will exercise great leniency with Mark as we enter this phase of our lives. Mark is 66-years-old; I am 60-years-old. We have lived an honest and decent life and look forward to our twilight years together. Thank you for taking the time to read this and consider it.

Sincerely,



Suzanne A. Noel

June 25, 2013

Honorable William M. Skretny
United States Chief Judge
Western District of New York
2 Niagara Square
Buffalo, New York 14202

re: U.S. v. Mark L. Kamholz, 10-CR-219

Dear Chief Judge Skretny:

It is with great esteem and honor that I have an opportunity to write on behalf of my brother-in-law Mark Kamholz. He has been an integral part of my family's life for over 30 years. His devotion and respect for his wife, my sister was apparent well before they married. That devotion has only strengthened over the years. He has been a rock in that family and together they have raised two fine, well educated, motivated and entrepreneurial young men. This is in good part due to Mark's guidance, mentoring and providing the necessary guardrails to allow the boys to learn the virtues of manhood and contribution to society civically and economically. This is just a slice of what I have witnessed with my own eyes, the results of which are my nephews, both who have started their own business beginning at the ages of 12 and 10 to the present day. Their work ethic and drive were instilled in them by Mark.

These boys, as is often the case, have grown up in a world of so many temptations to veer off the right path, but Mark steadfastly and dedicatedly set the right example for them, keeping them grounded and productive. They are living, breathing proof of Mark's values and virtues.

As a cancer survivor, I can look back with amazement at how my brother-in-law stood as a rock in my life as well. When speaking to cancer survivors at the Relay for Life, it brings tears to my eyes when to my surprise my brother-in-law showed up to support me and cheer me on. I can certainly say that Mark's support during this trying time made him not just a good man, but a great man.

Mark has also shown a great sense of loyalty to me as he has stepped in on several occasions when I was given the opportunity to advance my career, opportunities that required my leaving Western New York. Mark, without hesitation, assisted my widowed elderly mother which provided me with peace of mind while at the same time he was providing support for his own ageing widowed mother. When my Mom passed away, Mark was the one who was there to provide emotional support and reassurance. He then promptly took over the funeral arrangements and became the head of our family.

The words I put to paper do not do justice in conveying all that Mark is. These examples have been profound for me. Mark has always given more than he has taken, in all he does. His good deeds are still needed. His strength is also needed, by his wife and by his children... and most certainly, also by me.

We have willingly put all of our future hopes, goals and dreams on hold for well over three years waiting for this situation to come to fruition. Moreover, my nephew, Mark's son recently became engaged, but until he knows the fate of his Dad, he too has put on hold his wedding plans. This is a true reflection of his loyalty to his father.

I, along with my entire family (not to mention neighbors and community members) believe wholeheartedly that this world is a far better place because of Mark. He has done so much to contribute to his family and society, and he still has so much that he wants to continue to give back.

I thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity to offer my observations and thoughts about Mark given our over 30 year relationship. It is my hope that I was able to effectively articulate, the positive impact he has had not only in my life, but in the lives of his wife, my sister..and his children.

Respectfully yours,


Suzanne A. Noel

Carol A. Sheriff

Honorable William M. Skretny
United States Chief Judge
Western District of New York
2 Niagara Square
Buffalo, New York 14202

re: U.S. v. Mark L. Kamholz, 10-CR-219

Dear Chief Judge Skretny:

I am submitting this letter on behalf of Mark L. Kamholz. Mark and I are first cousins; our mothers were sisters. Because our mothers were very close to each other throughout their lives, Mark and I spent practically every holiday together, as well as other numerous days and evenings the two families spent together socializing, celebrating birthdays, watching football games; simply spending time together. We were a part of a very tightly knit family group that consisted of our grandparents, my parents and younger brother, and Mark and his parents. We often played together as children, and as we grew into young adults we remained close throughout our high school and college years. In fact, looking back at my childhood, because of the time we spent together I always felt as though he was more of an older brother to me than a cousin. An example of how close we remained as young adults is that when our maternal grandfather passed away, during my freshman year in college, Mark and I met at his parents' house and rode together, on his motorcycle, to the funeral. We felt most comfortable facing the loss of our grandfather and the funeral arriving and attending together.

I left Western New York in the fall of 1974, and have made my home in the southwestern portion of the country since that time. In spite of the distance separating us, Mark and I have remained in close contact by way of the telephone, cell phones, and the internet, and, while my parents were still alive, whenever I returned home to visit, we always met for lunch. After we both married and had children, and I traveled home with my family to visit, he always had us over for a pizza and chicken wings dinner so that our spouses and children would get to know each other as family, and as friends.

Mark is, and always has been a truly family man and family oriented person. For example, even as a college student, a time when many young adults are breaking away from family, he continued to be a part of our family gatherings. He always got along well with both his parents and mine, treating them all with respect, honor, and patience. As a child and into my high school years, I have no recollection of Mark and his parents having a falling out of any type. I have no recollection of hearing harsh words between them. I did see respect on Mark's part for them, their beliefs, political perspectives, and general views on life. My family had a dog, and for a period of time he wanted to have a dog. His parents absolutely refused to have one, and instead of getting angry, he talked with them about it, showed them how he would handle a dog when at our house, and in the end accepted and respected their decision. As an adult looking back at my life, I cannot say that I was nearly as respectful and patient with adults, nor were my close friends, and that makes Mark and the way he related to adults, particularly his parents, rather unique to me.

After I left WNY, Mark's father purchased a very nice boat. Mark was respected and trusted enough by his father that he was allowed to use the boat as if it was his, able to take it out on his own, with his friends. He told me that his parents knew he would take care of it. He also told me once that he had had an accident while using the boat. I believe he said he had hit a buoy, and damaged the hull, and he told me that he had promptly told his father about the accident, and then repaid him for its repair. To me the incident with the boat, and the way he handled it indicated the deep level of respect and trust he and his parents had for each other, and that he was open and honest and upfront in his dealing with his parents.

My younger brother was hit and killed by a drunk driver at the age of 19. I had already moved away, and when I went home for his funeral my parents told me that Mark had been most helpful and supportive of them throughout the period of time they were waiting for my brother's body to be returned home, and the planning of the funeral. The funeral was held in late January of 1976, and because of the severe weather that year the actual burial was delayed several weeks until it was possible to open the grave site. Mark had told my parents that it was very important to him to be present for the burial, both to support them and to honor his cousin, my brother. According to my parents, he was there that day, a man of his word. I was not because I was already home in Albuquerque, working, unable to get additional time off to return for the actual burial. That made it even more significant for my parents that he was there.

Another example of Mark's strong family connection and orientation is that after my brother passed away when my parents remained in WNY during the holidays, instead of traveling to be with me in New Mexico, he always included them in his family holiday activities, including his parents and then just his mother after his father passed away, so that they did not have to spend the holiday alone. For that I am grateful because I lived so very far away from for the better part of their senior years. I always knew they would be included by him, not left alone if they chose not to, or were unable to visit me. After my father passed away he was always available to help my mother if she needed assistance, and continued to include her in his family holiday celebrations; that was a tremendous relief for me since I was not close enough to be able to help her on short notice. My mother told me often how grateful she was to have Mark as her nephew, and how fortunate she was that he was so interested in her well-being and was willing to help her out when help was needed and to spend time with her. In reality, I was the fortunate one, fortunate to have a cousin so willing to share his family life with his elderly aunt.

When my mother passed away, it was Mark who met my family at the airport and drove us to my parents' home to prepare for the funeral. It was Mark who arranged for and took care of seeing that there were pall bearers for her coffin during the funeral, something I simply had not even thought about. It was Mark who welcomed people to the reception before I and my family arrived following the funeral. It was Mark who drove us back to the airport when we had to return to our home. It was Mark who was there for me. Without his help, a difficult time in my life would have been ever so much more difficult to handle. After we returned to Albuquerque, he kept an eye on my parents' home for me, driving by after work and regularly checking inside to make sure the heater was working and all was well, until spring time when I was able to get away and be there to pack it up and get it ready to be sold. His willingness to be there for me and to help out was, and still is, simply who he is.

I would also describe my cousin as a devoted husband and father; a real full time family man. He once told me that his sons accompanied he and his wife all of the time, whatever they did and wherever they went. For example, he told me that if they were celebrating their wedding anniversary by going out to a nice dinner, his sons, Jeremy and Jordan, went with them, and that they never traveled without taking them along. He simply enjoys his family and family life. His marriage has been a strong relationship for, if I remember correctly, 31 going on 32 years. His sons only recently moved out of the family home (in their mid-20's) because they felt perfectly at ease living at home, sharing their lives with their parents, and sharing their friends with their parents. Last year on Father's Day, Jordan posted a piece on Face Book stating that his father had been a wonderful father to him, to his brother, and to all of their friends, many of whom considered Mark their second father.

Mark and his wife were always there for his sons' hockey games when they were younger, driving long distances taking them and their team mates to games, watching games, handling their equipment, and I believe at one time he also coached their team. It was a family event for them. They began playing hockey as young children, and Mark liked to talk about their games and playing, and often took my family and me to games to watch them play when we were in town visiting my parents. I have never seen him as anything but patient, tolerant, loving, respectful of and helpful with his sons. I remember visiting and listening to his sons talk about the motors they were taking apart and rebuilding, probably about middle school ages, and when I asked about Mark about it in terms of safety concerns, he told me that it was what they loved to do and he fully supported and approved of them to do it under his guidance. They now own a successful business, one that their father fully supported them to go into. When I was visiting one time Mark told me that he had co-signed loans for them to purchase vehicles and equipment when they

were younger than the legal age of 21 to do so on their own. He trusted them to know what they were doing in purchasing the vehicles and equipment, allowed them to use his home as their office and base of operation, and equipment storage location for their business, and was very proud of the fact that they had worked, by their own choice and volition, since they were old enough to shovel driveways to get to where they were at that time, at such a relatively young age. That is true fatherly love, support, respect, and trust. In turn, he is loved and respected by his sons, evidenced only in a small way by the fact that, as Mark told me, they were present in court each and every day, standing by their father, during his trial.

Anecdotally, he spent considerable time during one family visit to his home to dress my son, who is a year younger than his oldest son, in his son's hockey goalie uniform. This was when they were all in elementary school. That may seem inconsequential to some, but to my son it was an amazing event made possible only by his cousin's interest in the fact that he had mentioned to Mark that he had never seen a hockey uniform close up, nor worn one. Hockey is not a big sport in New Mexico, and my son has never forgotten the interest in him and the extra care and attention Mark gave him that evening. He talks of it often, and has said looking back at that time made him realize that Mark was an amazing guy to take the time to allow him the opportunity to discover what it felt like to be a goalie for a brief period of time.

I would also like to speak to the side Mark that is conscientious, diligent, forthright, and prompt. After my brother passed away my parents decided to sell thirty or so acres of land, and a cabin, that they owned in the southern part of NY State. The property in Ashford Hollow had been a place Mark went with us often when we were both teenagers, and a place he loved. When my parents decided to sell, he offered to purchase it from them, as long as I had no objection to his doing so. He called me to talk with me about it and to make sure I was all right with his purchasing the property. Because I lived so far away I would not have been able to use the cabin, and take care of the property, and I told him it was fine with me. I also added that I was happy it would remain within the family, so to speak. He made an agreement with my parents, and undertook the purchase of the property, making payments over time. My parents later told me that during that time period he never once missed his monthly payment, that he delivered each one in person – which I observed and was actually present for on several occasions when I was home visiting, and that he was always prompt with the full payment. He purchased the property in his late 20's and took full ownership in his early 30's. Throughout the remainder of my parents' lives they were welcome guests at his place, and were often there with him and his family. I was always welcomed and spent time there during my visits to WNY with my family. Several months after my mother passed away I received a phone call from Mark telling me of a strange event that took place involving the property: the cabin had basically imploded under the weight of the heavy snow that year. The property had been my mother's dream when she and my father purchased it, and Mark and I both felt it was my mother's way of truly letting go of the property and passing it along to him, and we both laughed about it, in the easy and familiar way we have interacted for most of our lives.

In closing, I would like to state clearly and simply that Mark is and always has been a family oriented man. He is loving, kind, thoughtful, conscientious, forthright, honest, and lives up to all of his obligations in an honorable way, and he is loved. He is a very special person in my life because of all that I have described, and much more.

Respectfully yours, 


Carol A. Sheriff 